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Attachment 3

18 August 1971
1100 hours

BACKGROUND PAPER AND TALKING POINTS ON DECLARATIONS
ON STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS AND RDTT&E AND SPACE LAUNCHERS

I. BACKGROUND

The U.S. draft interim agreement of July 27, 1971 proposes a freeze in ICBM and SLBM deployment programs, limiting ICBM launchers to those operational and under active construction as of July 31, limiting MLBM launchers to those externally completed by December 31, and limiting SLBM launchers to those launchers on those SLBM submarines operational and under construction as of July 31. Current NSDM guidance calls for each side to declare the number of missile launchers operational and under active construction as of the date of the freeze.

The U.S. draft also allows each side to have additional strategic offensive missile launchers for RDTT&E purposes, as well as space launchers. The NSDM guidance does not require declarations of RDTT&E and space launchers.

Key Issues

1. What is our objective in seeking declarations?
2. What categories of information do we wish the USSR to declare and in what detail?

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3. Is there merit in calling for declarations of strategic offensive missile launchers for RDTT&E purposes?

Consideration of Key Issues

U.S. Objectives

Our objectives in calling for declarations of offensive launcher strengths are (a) to obtain an agreed baseline for subsequent monitoring of compliance with the agreement, (b) to surface any misunderstandings which might arise from different interpretations by the two sides of the terms used in the agreement, (c) to provide an opportunity to resolve any such misunderstandings, and (d) to establish a precedent of disclosing certain types of information which might be helpful to the work of a Standing Commission.

What Categories of Information and in What Detail?

There are a number of alternatives we should consider in deciding how best to meet our objectives:

- a. Gross total launchers only.
- b. Totals in each of the three categories--ICBM's, MLBM's, SLBM's.
- c. For SLBM's, launchers only or launchers plus submarines.
- d. For MLBM's, operational and active construction plus externally complete by December 31, 1971.

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A declaration of only the gross total number of launchers would be inadequate to our objectives. Differences within categories might cancel other differences and thus conceal problems. Moreover, we would not be calling for as much detail as our draft justifies and thus it would be a weak opener. Finally, if there was a discrepancy we would need to call for details in all categories because we would not know where the problem lay.

A better approach would be to call initially for totals broken down into the categories identified in the interim agreement. This could be presented as fully consistent with the language and intent of the agreement. It would be sufficiently detailed so as to verify the accuracy of our common understanding of the terms used in the agreement and to isolate the category or categories where any problems lay. We should make clear, however, that we reserved the right to call for greater detail if problems arose.

Of the categories identified in the U.S. draft interim agreement, the one most likely to cause problems is MLBM's, because MLBM's externally complete by December 31, 1971 is not a matter of past ^{were} history. If declarations/made before December 31, this would require the Soviets to make a future prediction of construction progress that might not be achieved and in any event would be revealing a military construction schedule.

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To meet this potential problem, we could call for a sequential declaration on MLBM's. The first step would be a declaration of MLBM launchers operational and under construction as of July 31, 1971, to be made separately from other ICBM's but at the same time as the other declarations. We could argue if necessary that this was consistent with the separate definition of MLBM's in paragraph 4(a). We could also stress our many past statements emphasizing the special and valid U.S. concern over MLBM's, and point out that it was important to prevent any misunderstandings that might be hidden if MLBM's were lumped into overall ICBM totals. We would make clear that a second step would be a further declaration on January 1, 1972 of MLBM launchers externally complete on December 31, 1971.

As far as the totals used in the declarations are concerned, we should encourage the Soviets to use exact numbers by supplying exact numbers in our own declaration. We could probably not object to their using rounded totals provided that the rounding did not distort the totals. Tens would seem adequate to our purposes. But launchers are deployed in groups whose multiples are not tens, and it does not appear that the USSR would be achieving any real security by rounding.

As to the method of making declarations, we could present the USSR side with a table containing stubs for the categories of information desired, with the U.S. figures filled in, and request that they fill

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in the blanks. A less desirable approach would be to give the Soviets figures for both the U.S. and Soviet launcher strengths, asking for confirmation and relying if necessary on silence as assent. Though this would be easier for them in terms of their sensitivities about security, it would set a bad precedent, and might (if our figures were in error) reveal our ignorance while failing to achieve the objective of surfacing and resolving problems.

RDTT&E And Space Launchers

The U.S. draft limits RDTT&E and space launchers to not more than 160 for each Party. The provision does not prohibit replacement or relocation. The limit is defined as including all strategic offensive launchers at research and development test ranges and facilities, launchers on test bed submarines and surface ships, and training launchers at operational sites. The USSR side has agreed to such a separate limit, equal for both Parties, though they have not put a number on it. Their definition, in Semenov's plenary statement of November 24, 1970, is not substantially different from ours.

Although declarations on these launchers are not called for in current NSDM guidance, there might be some merit in proposing such declarations to serve the same objectives as declarations of offensive missile launchers.

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It should be noted that because there is no prohibition on replacement within the 160 limit, it would be theoretically possible for the USSR to convert all of its RDTT&E launchers to "training" launchers for MLBM's. In the absence of a prohibition on replacement, however, a declaration of what existed on one day would not add significantly to the weight of a protest that changes at a later date violated the intent of the agreement. The intent that there be no major increase in MLBM launchers within the 160 total could be made clear during the negotiations if deemed necessary.

In the RDTT&E and space launcher area, there could be considerable difficulty in establishing a baseline and resolving misunderstandings without calling for very detailed declarations. In the USSR, the relatively small number of launchers involved are at 4 test ranges, of which 3 have both RDTT&E and space launchers, plus 17 ICBM deployment complexes. SLBM launchers are on land and on shipboard. Some space launchers have been converted from operational launchers, some launchers at test ranges are being converted from one purpose to another, shipboard launchers may be for operational as well as RDTT&E use, and there are some launchers at test ranges which have been inactive for some time, especially in the U.S. There are also various mock-up training devices which have some resemblance to launchers, but these should present no problem because they have no missiles and no launch capability.

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These complications make it unlikely that misunderstandings in this area could be resolved without going into such detail about numbers, location and function of launchers that the Soviets would resist on security grounds. Recognizing that there might thus be no very satisfactory resolution, declarations of RDTT&E launchers could at least trigger further discussion of terminology with the Soviets and could alert U.S. intelligence collectors to seek unilateral resolution of any problems.

To try for as much detail as we could justify in terms of the U.S. draft interim agreement, we could call for declarations broken down into the categories set forth in paragraph 5 of the draft. It might be desirable to try for a breakdown into the ICBM, MLBM, and SLBM categories named in paragraphs 1-4. This would have the advantage, not only of further isolating any misunderstandings, but also of making clear that the term "strategic offensive missile launchers" in paragraph 5 refers only to launchers of the types limited by the agreement and not to such things as IRBM and MRBM launchers.

II. TALKING POINTS

Mr. Minister, we have both agreed that limitations on strategic offensive arms would be verified by national technical means. In order to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguous situations that could arise, particularly at the time the agreement comes into force, the U.S. side believes that there should be an exchange of declarations regarding the

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number of strategic offensive arms in each of the several categories specified in the interim agreement. [You will recall that in our proposal of August 4, 1970 the U.S. expressed the desirability of declarations by each side of strategic offensive weapons.] We believe that such an approach would serve the interests of both sides. It would provide an agreed baseline for verifying compliance with the agreement; it would help resolve misunderstandings which might arise from different interpretations of the terms used in the agreement; it would allow the opportunity to resolve such misunderstandings before the agreement came into force.

We would propose that the declarations of strategic offensive weapons include ICBM launchers operational and under active construction as of July 31, 1971, MLBM launchers operational and under active construction as of July 31, 1971, SLBM launchers and SLBM submarines operational and under active construction as of July 31, 1971. We would further propose that a subsequent declaration be made on January 1, 1972 of MLBM launchers externally complete on December 31, 1971.

[In the interest of furthering our common objectives, we would like to provide you at this time with a table listing the categories of information we think are required as well as a declaration on the number of U.S. strategic offensive arms included in these categories. We request that you provide our side with a similar declaration. (See Attachment 1)]

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Mr. Minister, we have already expressed general agreement on the need for a separate limit, equal for both sides, on offensive missile launchers for research, development, testing, evaluation, and training, and launchers for space missions. In order to further our common objectives and remove any ground for subsequent misunderstanding, we believe that it would be in the interests of both sides to exchange declarations on the numbers and types of launchers included in the categories specified in the interim agreement.

We would propose that declarations be made as of [date] on ICBM launchers, MLBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and launchers for space missions, at research and development test ranges and facilities, as well as launchers on testbed submarines and surface ships and training launchers at operational sites.

[In the interest of furthering our common objectives, we would like to provide you at this time with a table listing the number of launchers included in the foregoing categories specified in the interim agreement. We request that you provide our side with a similar declaration. (See Attachment 2)]

III. POSSIBLE SOVIET QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED ANSWERS

1. Why does the U.S. side list MLBM's separately in declaring ICBM launchers operational and under construction as of July 31, 1971?

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Paragraph 2 of the U.S. draft interim agreement makes no such distinction.

We believe that our request is consistent with the separate treatment of MLBM's in paragraph 2 and paragraph 4(a). Moreover, we have repeatedly called the Soviet side's attention to U.S. special concerns with these weapons, and we believe that such a declaration would help avoid misunderstandings that could arise if MLBM's are included in overall ICBM totals.

2. Since the number of launchers permitted for RDTT&E purposes is the same for both sides and since there is no provision prohibiting replacement or relocation, why is it necessary to exchange declarations?

Declarations of launchers for RDTT&E purposes would help both sides to determine more clearly which launchers are operational and which are meant for RDTT&E purposes. Avoidance of ambiguity on this matter would help increase the confidence of both sides in compliance with the provisions of the agreement.

3. Why are submarines called for, not just SLBM launchers?

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Because the launchers and submarines are integral to the SLBM weapon system, we have stipulated in our draft that each side be limited to those launchers on those submarines operational and under active construction as of the date of the freeze. A declaration of each of these is consistent with the text and would contribute to increasing confidence in compliance with the agreement.

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